

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6945

INFO AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

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E. O. 11652 N/ A

TAGS: PINT PGOV DA

SUBJECT: PRE- CONGRESS RIFTS APPEAR IN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

BEGIN SUMMARY. OLD DIVISIONS WITHIN DANISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY HAVE CROPPED UP AS IT PREPARES FOR PARTY CONGRESS IN SEPTEMBER. DISSATISFACTION OF LEFT- WING GROUP WITH DRAFT PARTY PROGRAM ASSOCIATED WITH FOREIGN MINISTER K. B. ANDERSEN HAS RESULTED IN HIS WITHDRAWAL AS CHAIRMAN OF PROGRAM COMMITTEE. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESSURE HAS BEEN BUILDING UP ALONG TRADITIONAL FAULT LINES WITHIN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SDP) AS IT PREPARES FOR ITS QUADRENNIAL CONGRESS SEPTEMBER 16-19. AT SDP EXECUTIVE
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COMMITTEE MEETING MAY 12, MINISTER OF FOREIGN ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IVAR NORGAARD SPOKE FOR LEFT- WING GROUP INCLUDING AT LEAST THREE OTHER MINISTERS, (MINISTER OF ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS DORTE BENNEDSEN, TRAFFIC MINISTER JENS KAMPMANN, AND SOCIAL MINISTER EVA GRADAL), PLUS A NUMBER OF OTHER INFLUENTIAL PARTY FIGURES, IN CHALLENGING DRAFT PROGRAM FOR NEXT FOUR YEARS WHICH HAS BEEN PUT TOGETHER BY COMMITTEE HEADED BY FOREIGN MINISTER K. B. ANDERSEN. GROUP DEMANDED WITHDRAWAL OF OFFICIAL DRAFT, WHICH THEY DESCRIBED AS BLAND, SOMETHING- FOR- EVERYBODY PRAGMATISM, AND OFFERED AN ALTERNATIVE, MORE IDEOLOGICALLY PHRASED, DRAFT FOR PARTY CONSIDERATION.

2. IN COURSE OF STORMY SESSION, IT WAS DISCLOSED THAT LEFT WING FRACTION HAS BEEN WORKING ON THEIR DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR TWO MONTHS WITHOUT INFORMING ANDERSEN, WHO ANGRILY RESIGNED HIS CHAIRMANSHIP OF PROGRAM COMMITTEE . HE REPORTEDLY REFUSED SEVERAL APPEALS TO RECONSIDER HIS DECISION AND VACATED SCENE OF CONFLICT BY DEPARTING SHORTLY THEREAFTER ON HIS TWO- WEEK TRIP TO CHINA AND AUSTRALIA. PARTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE RULED THAT LEFT- WING GROUP HAD VIOLATED USUAL PARTY PRACTICE AND GROUP WAS TOLD TO SUBMIT THEIR DRAFT TO A LOCAL PARTY SECTION FOR PRESENTATION TO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN NORMAL MANNER. PRIME MINISTER ANKER JORGENSEN MEANWHILE IS ASSUMING CHAIRMANSHIP OF PROGRAM COMMITTEE, AND IT IS EXPECTED THAT MODIFIED PROGRAM, COMBINING BOTH DRAFTS, MAY EVENTUALLY BE PRESENTED TO CONGRESS.

3. NOW THAT INTERNAL STRAINS HAVE SURFACED, PRESS SPECULATION HAS TURNED TO QUESTION OF NEW PARTY LEADERSHIP. GENERAL ASSUMPTION IS THAT ANKER JORGENSEN WILL BE ELECTED PARTY CHAIRMAN, ALTHOUGH HE HAS IN PAST EXPRESSED RELUCTANCE TO TAKE ON THAT POST IN ADDITION TO HIS DUTIES AS PRIME MINISTER. SOME RESHUFFLING OF PARTY AND MINISTERIAL POSTS WILL PROBABLY THEN OCCUR, WITH POSITION OF PARTY VICE CHAIRMAN TAKING ON GREATLY INCREASED SIGNIFICANCE. DEFENSE MINISTER KJELD OLESEN IS CURRENTLY FRONT RUNNER IN FIELD OF SEVERAL CANDIDATES FOR THAT POST, OCCUPANCY OF WHICH SHOULD GUARANTEE HIM GOOD CHANCE OF EVENTUALLY SUCCEEDING JORGENSEN AS PARTY CHAIRMAN AND PERHAPS AS PRIME MINISTER. JORGENSEN IS STILL ONLY 50 YEARS OLD AND COULD CONCEIVABLY MAINTAIN HIS LEADERSHIP FOR ANOTHER DECADE, BUT OLESEN IS TEN YEARS YOUNGER

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AND CAN AFFORD TO WAIT.

4. SOCIAL DEMOCRATS ARE SHORT OF CANDIDATES TO REPLACE OLESEN AS DEFENSE MINISTER, WHICH MAY COMPLICATE CABINET RESTRUCTURING. JUSTICE MINISTER K. AXEL NIELSEN AND AGRICULTURAL MINISTER IB FREDERIKSEN ARE EXPECTED TO LEAVE GOVERNMENT AT FIRST SUITABLE OPPORTUNITY AND FOREIGN MINISTER

ANDERSEN' S RECENT DIFFICULTIES WITH LEFT WING FRACTION HAVE
REAWAKENED RUMORS THAT HE MIGHT ALSO BE COMTEMPLATING
RETREAT FROM HIS MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES.
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